

# Variation in *Nepenthes albo-marginata*

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*Nepenthes albo-marginata* is a widespread species that has been reported from peninsular Malaysia, northern Borneo and western Sumatra. Although widely distributed this species only occurs in a limited number of locations.

I have seen *N. albo-marginata* on Penang Island, atop Mt. Ophir and Kedah Peak in peninsular Malaysia, at Bako National Park in Sarawak and in the south of Sabah near the border with Brunei. This species has also been reported to occur on Nias Island off the west coast of Sumatra. *N. albo-marginata* appears to be restricted to coastal locations, especially lowland hills and bluffs up to 1,000 metres in altitude.

There are at least two distinct forms of this species. In effect these two forms are separated by the South China Sea. The peninsular Malaysian form has large pitchers that measure up to 20 cm high and 3 cm wide. The form from Borneo has slender, pencil-like pitchers that measure up to 15 cm high and 1 cm wide.

Although the colour of the pitchers is not a reliable taxonomic characteristic the

pitchers of the peninsular Malaysian form are crimson or heavily flecked with magenta. The form from Borneo is a lime green colour.

Further study and collections are necessary in order to determine whether these forms are sub-species or even species. However *N. albo-marginata* is easily identified by a white band adjacent to the peristome. The white band is formed by a dense layer of closely packed hairs. In older pitchers the band is less distinct. One plant observed on Mt. Ophir and thought to be a natural hybrid between *N. albo-marginata* and *N. sanguinea* still retained the white band.

At least four varieties of *N. albo-marginata* (var. *villosa*, *typica*, *tonmentella* and *rubra*) have been described in the literature. It is not known whether any of these varieties correspond to the two forms mentioned in this article.

Although I have not seen *N. albo-marginata* on Sumatra the proximity of the island to the Malaysian peninsula indicates that it takes the form found there.





*Nepenthes albo-marginata* 'Penang form,' lower pitcher. Photo by Roger Shivas. See page 13.



*Nepenthes albo-marginata* 'Borneo form' upper pitchers. Photo by Roger Shivas. See page 13.